

Lesson
8

Using Verb Tenses

Teaching

In writing and speaking, you use the tenses of verbs to indicate when events happen. Changing tenses indicates a change in time. If you do not need to indicate a change in time between two actions, keep the tenses of verbs the same.

The Present Tenses These tenses show events occurring in the present time:

Present	Action occurs in the present.	count, counts
Present perfect	Action began in past and continues in present.	has counted, have counted
Present progressive	Action is in progress now.	is counting, are counting

The Past Tenses These tenses show events occurring in a past time:

Past	Action began and ended in the past.	counted
Past perfect	Action began and ended before another event in the past.	had counted
Past progressive	Action in the past was ongoing.	was counting

The Future Tenses These tenses show events occurring in a future time:

Future	Action will occur in the future.	will count
Future perfect	Action will occur in the future before another action in the future.	will have counted
Future progressive	Action in the future will be ongoing.	will be counting

Using Verb Tenses

Underline the verb form in parentheses that correctly completes each sentence.

1. In normal activities, we usually (use, had used) ten as our base for counting.
2. Last night, whoever (counted, will count) sheep did so on a base ten system.
3. Tomorrow, children (have used, will use) their fingers to find answers to math facts.
4. Long ago, our counting system (developed, develops) with the base of ten.
5. Obviously, using ten (came, will be coming) easily because of our ten fingers.
6. Some of the oldest writings still in existence (had shown, show) counting by ten.
7. Over 2,000 years ago, Romans (were using, will be using) ten-based numerals.
8. Since the founding of the country, the U.S. government (has produced, will produce) coins and bills based on a decimal system.
9. Yet a ten-based system is not the only one you (have used, had used) today.
10. A clock (has counted, counts) to twelve and then starts over.
11. Before an hour passed, sixty minutes (had passed, are passing).
12. A week (consisted, consists) of seven days, not ten.

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Underline the verb form in parentheses that correctly completes each sentence.

1. For thousands of years, people (have recognized, are recognizing) the need for standard measurements.
2. What would happen if different construction crews at the same site (were using, will use) rulers of different lengths?
3. For many centuries, such problems (were occurring, are occurring) frequently.
4. Today, we (were avoiding, avoid) problems by using standardized measurements.
5. In the past, each carpenter (measured, measures) a foot according to his own foot.
6. Over time, each country (set, will be setting) standards of weights and measures.
7. At last, many scientists (will agree, agreed) on a common set of standards.
8. The metric system (had related, relates) measures of length, weight, heat, force, and other quantities.
9. By 1950, almost all countries (had adopted, are adopting) the metric system.
10. In the future, even the United States (has adopted, will adopt) the metric system.

B. Correcting Sentence Order

The sentences of this story are out of order. Read the story. Use the verb tenses and context to determine the correct order. Then rewrite the story in paragraph form below, with the sentences in correct order.

Before my parents took their first cruise, my family had traveled together.
All of us will see glaciers and the midnight sun.
Now they are planning a cruise for the whole family.
They really enjoyed the cruise.
This time they want to go to Alaska.
For example, we had traveled to the Grand Canyon.
Then my parents took a cruise to the Caribbean.

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Application

A. Correcting Verb Tenses

Each underlined verb is in an incorrect tense. Write a correct form of the verb on the line.

1. Next June, my parents have been married for fifteen years. _____
2. After the old tapestry had been cleaned, the museum staff hangs it carefully. _____
3. When the sun came out, the children's snowman will melt. _____
4. A penny had been worth one-tenth of a dime and one-hundredth of a dollar. _____
5. For this past week, the train will be arriving on time. _____
6. When we lost our electric power, we are watching my favorite sitcom. _____
7. Before Maizie won a race, she is competing in several races unsuccessfully. _____
8. Danita kept forgetting her lines while she is acting in the play. _____
9. I had checked the price of this coat in several stores before I am buying it. _____
10. While Dave mows the lawn, his sister washed the windows. _____

B. Correcting Sentence Order

Some of the verbs in this paragraph are in the wrong tense. Decide which verbs must be changed. Write the numbers of these sentences below. Then rewrite those sentences, correcting those verbs. Underline the verbs you have changed.

(1) For my grandparents' 50th wedding anniversary, my parents, aunts, and uncles bought them tickets for a cruise. (2) They said it was a small payback for all my grandparents are doing for them through the years. (3) And it's something they remember for the rest of their lives. (4) By the time my grandparents return, they will have been gone almost three weeks. (5) By then they will visit Barbados, St. Thomas, and other islands. (6) I hope they were enjoying the cruise now. (7) With luck, they have a great time.
